

**Thursday, March 6, 2014**

General Law Committee

**PUBLIC HEARING TESTIMONY**

**IN SUPPORT OF  
HOUSE BILL 5425,  
AN ACT CONCERNING THE SALE OF FARM WINERY BRANDY**

Chairman Doyle, Chairman Baram, Ranking Member Witkos, Ranking Member Carter, and General Law Committee Membership,

Thank you for raising House Bill 5425 for hearing today. As a result of my request to our Representative Mike Alberts for verification that our Farm Winery, Taylor Brooke Winery, can sell brandy made from our Connecticut Grown grapes, it was discovered that under current statute, brandy could only be sold by a winery that has distilled the wine into brandy on the farm winery property.

This requirement of distilling the wine into alcohol and then aging in a barrel to turn it into brandy on our farm is a disadvantage to our ability to manufacture a product for sale utilizing our Connecticut grown grapes and wine.

We are requesting that the Act be amended to allow Connecticut Grown grapes or fruit to be distilled at an off premise Connecticut based distillery so that our growth of a Connecticut Grown Brandy product can be realized.

The reason and rational for this request is that the capital funding and additional Federal licensing for a Distillery permit is very expensive and time consuming and would thus limit our ability to expand our product line.

The benefits for the State to allow distilling of Connecticut grown fruit into brandy can be that of an increase in Tax revenue from both an Alcohol tax basis and a Sales Tax basis. It will also benefit the existing Connecticut based distilleries by giving them an additional revenue stream.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to address this important matter.

Richard & Linda Auger  
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